Request was also made to expedite ongoing gauge conversion projects. These projects are progressed as per availability of resources.

(c) The new works would be taken up as and when sanctioned.

(d) Does not arise.

More trains for South Central Railway

1632. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the trains running in the South Central Railway especially on the routes of Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam are insufficient and three more trains are required;

(b) if so, the comments of Government in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken to run more trains in the route of SCR in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Following additional services have been announced in the Railway Budget for 2009-10 which will serve the passengers on South Central Railway:

1. Vishakhapatnam-Secunderabad-Mumbai Express
2. Bilaspur-Tiruneveli Express
3. Hazrat Nizamuddin-Bangalore Rajdhani Express via Kacheguda
4. Lucknow-Rae Bareli-Bangalore Express
5. Howrah-Bangalore Express
6. Delhi-Secunderabad Express (Non stop)

The frequency of 7091/7092 Secunderabad-Patna Express will be increased from bi-weekly to daily and of 2739/2740 Secunderabad-Vishakhapatnam Express from four days a week to daily.

Price-rise of steel

1633. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the price pattern of domestic steel during the last two years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the prices of steel has continued to rise despite lowering of price of critical raw material; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to contain this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP): (a) The price trend of a representative category of steel in the retail market of Delhi is given on a quarterly basis from June 2009 to June 2007 in the table below:

(Rs./ Tonne)

Delhi	TMT 10mm	Wire Rods 8mm	HR Coils 2.0mm	CR Coils 0.63mm
June, 2009	35479	35249	34289	36568
March, 2009	34218	37357	34491	36968
December, 2008	36565	37858	36498	36039
Sept., 2008	41934	43664	45327	48700
June, 2008	47451	45925	50045	49492
March, 2008	43775	43450	44000	48000
December, 2007	32200	32000	35100	38000
Sept., 2007	29700	30500	34500	37500
June, 2007	32500	30500	36400	39000

SOURCE: JPC Open Market Prices (inclusive of transportation cost, taxes and duties and retailers' Margin)

(b) Steel Prices started falling rapidly from September 2008 onwards after achieving their peak in June/July 2008. Iron ore prices on the spot market had started falling at the same time. However, contracted price of imported coking coal, which generally account for the largest share in the total material cost of steel, continued to rule at a very high level of $300-$315/T till the annual revision in April-May 2009. Currently the steel prices have just about stabilized at the pre-escalation levels prevailing in January 2008. However there are no firm indications of a sustained upward movement in steel price.

(c) Steel is a deregulated sector and steel prices are determined by the market based on factors like demand and supply situation, landed cost of imports, input costs and price and availability of substitutes etc, and the role of the Government is just that of a facilitator. Nonetheless, in order to stabilize price and supply of steel in the domestic market government has been taking various policy initiatives as necessary.

Target for indigenous steel production

1634. SHRI N. R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Steel Policy target for indigenous production of 110 MT per annum in next five years;

(b) if do, the share of public and private sector units therein;

(c) whether Government proposes to invest heavily in steel sector to achieve the target;